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In Preparation for Monday Vaccination Deadline, Governor Hochul Releases Comprehensive Plan to Address Preventable Health Care Staffing Shortage

PUBLIC SAFETY

HEALTH

COVID-19 VACCINE

KEYWORDS/COVID-

SAFETY)

VACCINE)

Plan Includes Preparation of State of Emergency Declaration to Supplement Workforce Supply at Health Care Facilities

Would Enable Qualified Health Care Professionals Licensed in Other States or Countries, Recent Graduates, Retired and Formerly Practicing Health Care Professionals to Practice in New York

Other Options Include Deployment of Medically-Trained National Guard, Requesting Federal Disaster Medical Assistance Teams (DMATs), Working with the Federal Government to Expedite Visa Requests for Medical Professionals

Governor Holds Firm on Ensuring Health Care Workers are Vaccinated to Protect Public Health

In preparation for Monday's vaccination deadline, Governor Kathy Hochul today released a comprehensive plan to address preventable staffing shortages in hospitals and other health care facilities statewide.

"We are still in a battle against COVID to protect our loved ones, and we need to fight with every tool at our disposal," **Governor Hochul said.** "I am monitoring the staffing situation closely, and we have a plan to increase our health care workforce and help alleviate the burdens on our hospitals and other health care facilities. I commend all of the health care workers who have stepped up to get themselves vaccinated, and I urge all remaining health care workers who are unvaccinated to do so now so they can continue providing care."

The plan includes preparing to sign an executive order if necessary to declare a state of emergency that seeks to increase workforce supply and allow qualified health care professionals licensed in other states or countries, recent graduates, retired and formerly practicing health care professionals to practice in New York State.

The Department of Labor has issued guidance to clarify that workers who are terminated because of refusal to be vaccinated are not eligible for unemployment insurance absent a valid doctor-approved request for medical accommodation.

Other options include deployment of medically-trained National Guard members, and partnering with the federal government to deploy Disaster Medical Assistance Teams (DMATs) to assist local health and medical systems. Additionally, Governor Hochul plans to work with the federal government and other state leaders to explore ways to expedite visa requests for medical professionals.

As of September 22, 84% of all hospital employees in New York State were fully vaccinated. As of September 23, 81% of staff at all adult care facilities and 77% of all staff at nursing home facilities in New York State were fully vaccinated.


According to the regulation issued by the State Department of Health, all health care workers in New York State, at hospitals and nursing homes, are to be vaccinated against COVID-19 with the first dose received by Monday, September 27, and staff at other covered entities including home

care, hospice, and adult care facilities are to be vaccinated by October 7. The regulation also applies to all out of state and contract medical staff who practice in New York State.


"As nurses, we are committed to providing the best care for our patients and working with the Governor on these efforts. We need adequate staffing to protect our patients and our colleagues, and we want to do everything we can to avoid returning to crisis levels during the pandemic. We are grateful to Governor Hochul for her leadership and for her bold and strategic plan to support nurses, patients, and ensuring the best possible care," **said Pat Kane, RN, Executive Director of New York State Nurses Association.**

"UUP will continue to fight for adequate funding and staffing at the SUNY Hospitals and is dedicated to protecting the health and safety of our members and their patients. We understand the step that Governor Hochul is taking in light of the potential staff shortage. We remain hopeful that this step will not be necessary. We continue to urgently call on all UUP members and all New Yorkers to get vaccinated immediately," **said Frederick E. Kowal, PH.D, President of United University Professions.**

Contact the Governor's Press Office





















 **Contact us by phone:**

Albany: (518) 474 - 8418
New York City: (212) 681 - 4640

 **Contact us by email:**

Press.Office@exec.ny.gov

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